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RUEHJB/AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA 0509  
RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 1322  
RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 2104  
RUEHKI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0658  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0428  
RUEHNR/AMEMBASSY NAIROBI 1438  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0688  
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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - TEXT ADDED PARAGRAPH 4

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PREF](#) [RW](#)

SUBJECT: NO FORMAL REQUEST YET FOR SUPPORT FOR RETURNEES  
FROM DRC

REF: KIGALI 142

Classified By: CDA Cheryl Sim for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) The Government of Rwanda (GOR) Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC) and the United Nations High Council for Refugees (UNHCR) jointly held an information session March 3 on the status of preparations and outstanding needs to address Rwandans returning from conflict areas in neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The meeting, chaired by MINALOC's Minister of State for Community Development and Social Affairs Christine Nyatani and UNHCR Country Representative Annette Nyekan, included representatives from donor countries (the United States, Belgium, and the Netherlands), the UN and other international bodies (UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNDP, UNAIDS, FAO, WHO, WFP, the World Bank), and the GOR (including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

¶2. (SBU) In her briefing, Minister Nyatani said the GOR anticipates a "possible mass influx" of up to 40,000 refugees and returnees from the DRC following the joint Rwanda-DRC military operation in the Congo (reftel). (Note: This estimate does not include some 18,000 Rwandans currently living as refugees in Uganda. End note.) Most of the returnees are dependents of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) combatants. According to UNHCR figures (current as of March 5), 4,064 returnees had been processed through the two transit centers (TC) since January ¶2009.

¶3. (SBU) Currently UNHCR and MONUC bring returnees to the Rwandan border; they are then received at one of two TCs, Nyagatare and Nkamira. Returnees typically stay in the TCs (which can accommodate 4000 and 5000 returnees, respectively) for two or three days, where they receive basic health services including vaccinations and a repatriation package consisting of blankets, plastic sheeting, and plastic water cans. Returnees are then assisted to their place of origin and provided with food support from the World Food Program for three months; their re-integration process is also monitored.

¶4. (C) The Minister stated 8,000 shelters would be needed to accommodate the anticipated population, at a cost of USD 20.6 million. In addition to shelter, returnees will also require

water and sanitation assistance, HIV/AIDS prevention activities, education and vocational training, and agricultural and other income-generation support. Nyekan admitted UNHCR and the GOR were under-prepared for the large number of potential returnees. She noted that until the recent joint military operation, the potential influx of FDLR family members had seemed to be little more than speculation. As a result, it had not been factored into UNHCR's 2009 Country Operation Plan. Looking ahead, Nyatani emphasized the necessity of incorporating returnee re-integration concerns into GOR district planning. Other UN agencies present also pressed for the participation of NGOs and civil society organizations to meet their needs. CDA asked if the GOR and UNHCR were seeking donor support. The Minister replied, "Not at this time," but added there would be additional briefings in the weeks ahead as soon as the Ministry could determine what new support might be needed.

¶5. (C) Comment. With over ten percent of the estimated returnees already in Rwanda since the year's beginning and numbers continuing to rise, the GOR is only now seriously addressing how returnee needs will be met. Their successful re-integration into Rwandan society is vital to breaking the FDLR's hold on its combatants and supporters. End comment.  
SIM